



General topics to help keep your home and family fire safe



Vermont Department of Public Safety
DIVISION OF FIRE SAFETY

PUBLIC EDUCATION SECTION

1311 US Route 302, Suite 600, Barre, VT 05641

800-640-2106

or Visit the DFS Website:

www.firesafety.vermont.gov

Home Smoke Alarms

Working smoke alarms save lives, cutting the risk of dying in a home fire in half. Smoke alarms should be installed and maintained in every home.

Install smoke alarms in every sleeping room, outside each separate sleeping area, and on every level of the home including in the basement.

Test smoke alarms at least once a month using the test button. Make sure everyone in the home understands the sound of the smoke alarm and knows how to respond.

For smoke alarms that do not have nonreplaceable (long-life) batteries, replace batteries at least once a year. If the alarm chirps, replace only the battery. Replace all smoke alarms when they are 10 years old.

Replace any smoke alarm that does not respond after a new battery has been installed in Vermont it is required that when you replace an alarm it must be replaced with a photoelectric-only-type smoke alarm.

All rental housing must have working smoke alarms. Contact your landlord, property manager, or fire department for help.



Carbon Monoxide (CO)

Carbon monoxide is a gas. You cannot see it, taste it, or smell it. It is created when fuels do not burn completely. Kerosene, gasoline, coal, natural gas, propane, and wood are examples of fuels. Carbon monoxide gas can kill people and pets.

A carbon monoxide alarm will let you know if high levels of the gas are in your home.

Install and maintain carbon monoxide alarms outside each separate sleeping area, on every level of the home. If you have combination smoke–carbon monoxide (CO) alarms, follow the directions for smoke alarm installation.

Push the test button each month to make sure the alarm is working.

In Vermont, when A person constructs a single-family dwelling or sales a home it is required that one or more carbon monoxide alarms be installed in the vicinity of any bedrooms in the dwelling in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.



Always make sure you have a working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms installed in your home.

Home Fire Escape

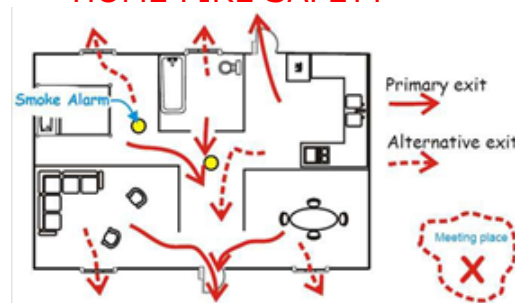
Plan. Have your children draw a home escape plan.

Discuss with your family evacuation of your home and establish a safe meeting place.

Teach your children to crawl on the floor to avoid smoke and heat. Show them how to feel the door with the back of their hand and to not open the door if it is hot to the touch.

Make sure to have two ways out of every sleeping room, and that the windows can be opened easily.

Sleep with bedroom doors closed to provide a barrier of protection from smoke and heat spreading into your bedrooms. Practice home escape drills with your family.



Medical Oxygen

Medical oxygen can cause material to ignite more easily and make fires burn at a faster rate than normal. It can make an existing fire burn faster and hotter.

Never smoke where medical oxygen is used.

Keep oxygen cylinders at least 5 feet (1.5 meters) from a heat source, open flames, or electrical devices

If medical oxygen or an oxygen tank is used in the home, the amount of oxygen in the air, furniture, clothing, hair, and bedding can increase, making it easier for a fire to spread. This means that there is a higher risk of fires and burns.



Flammable and Combustible Liquids

Flammable and combustible liquids, which include gasoline, kerosene, lacquers, paint thinner, some cleaning fluids, hair spray, and paint solvents can be fire hazards because their vapors ignite easily. Even nail polish and nail-polish remover are flammable and should not be used near an open flame.



Do not store hazardous liquids near any source of heat, sparks, or flame. That includes electric motors, which can spark when they switch on or off.

Lithium Ion Batteries

Lithium ion batteries supply power to many kinds of devices, including smart phones, laptops, scooters, e-cigarettes, smoke alarms, and toys. Handle these batteries carefully. In rare instances, they can cause a fire or explosion.

Always follow manufacturer's instructions that come with the device.

Only use the charging cord that came with the device.

Do not charge a device under your pillow, on your bed, or on a couch.

Stop using the lithium ion battery if you notice any of the following problem signs:
 (A) Odor (B) Change in color (C) Too much heat (D) Change in shape (E) Leaking
 (F) Odd noises



Consider Fire Sprinklers

Consider having a residential fire sprinkler system installed in your home. They are designed to maintain a survivable environment.



Other Measures to Keep You and Your Family Safe

Cooking

Never leave the stove unattended.



Keep combustible material and loose clothing away from open flames.

Keep the appliance and cooking area clean.

Use extra caution with cooking oils as they can ignite easily.

Always turn the pan handle sideways.

Always keep a lid nearby when you are cooking. If a small grease fire starts in a pan, smother the flames by sliding the lid over the pan. Turn off the burner. Do not move the pan. To keep the fire from restarting, leave the lid on until the pan has cooled

Heating

Have a 3-foot “kid-free zone” around open fires and space heaters.



Make sure fuel-burning equipment is vented to the outside to avoid carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning.

All heaters need space. Keep anything that can burn at least 3 feet away from heating equipment. Keep the furnace area clean and uncluttered.

Maintain heating equipment, chimneys and vents by having them cleaned and inspected annually by a qualified professional at least once a year.

Turn Electric Space heaters off when you go to bed or leave the room.

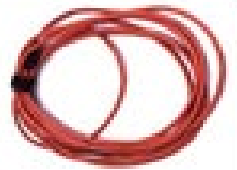
If you smell gas, do not light the appliance. Leave the building immediately and call 9-1-1, the fire department, or the gas company.

In wood stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood. In pellet stoves, burn only dry, seasoned wood pellets.

Allow ashes from wood stoves and to cool before disposing of them. Place ashes in a tightly covered metal container and keep the ash container at least 10 feet away from the home and any other nearby buildings. Never empty the ash directly into a trash can. Douse and saturate the ashes with water.

Electrical

Electrical work should be done only by a qualified electrician.



Have your home electrical system inspected in accordance with local requirements when buying, selling, or renovating a home.

Extension cords are for temporary use only.

Check electrical cords often. Replace cracked, damaged, and loose electrical or extension cords. Do not try to repair them.

Avoid putting cords under rugs and carpets, across doorways, or where they can be damaged or pinched by furniture.

Major appliances (refrigerators, stoves, washers, dryers, microwave ovens, etc.) should be plugged directly into a wall outlet. Never use an extension cord with a major appliance—it can easily overheat and start a fire.

If a fuse blows or a circuit breaker trips often, find out why and get the problem corrected before turning the breaker back on or replacing the fuse. Have a qualified electrician inspect and fix it.

Clothes Dryers

Have your dryer installed and serviced by a professional.

Do not use the dryer without a lint filter.

Clean out the dryer’s lint filter before each use of the dryer. Remove the lint that has collected around the drum.

Clean lint out of the vent pipe quarterly or have a dryer lint removal service do it for you. If you notice that it is taking longer than usual for your clothes to dry, it should be cleaned more often.

Rigid or flexible metal venting should be used to sustain proper air flow and drying time to reduce the risk of fire or fire spread.

Make sure the air exhaust vent pipe is not restricted and the outdoor vent flap will open when the dryer is operating.